

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00
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R 220745Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 793
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 1643

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, SF
SUBJECT: APPEAL PLANNED FOR "GOCH STREET TERRORIST"

REF: PRETORIA 1345

1. ISMAEL AYOB, ATTORNEY FOR SOLOMON MAHLANGU, SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR HIS PARTICIPATION IN THE JUNE 1977 SHOOTING OF TWO WHITES IN DOWNTOWN JOHANNESBURG TOLD EMBOFF ON MARCH 21 THAT HE WILL DEFINITELY APPEAL AGAINST MAHLANGU'S CONVICTION AND SENTENCE. AYOB THINKS THAT THE PRESIDING JUDGE, JUSTICE THERON ERRED IN ADMITTING MAHLANGU'S "CONFESSION" UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES REPORTED IN REFTTEL, AND FEELS THAT JUSTICE THERON WAS WRONG IN CONVICTING MAHLANGU ON THE GROUNDS OF CONSPIRACY. AYOB SAID THAT THERON'S DECISIONS HAVE BEEN OVERTURNED IN THE PAST AND NOTED THAT AT ONE TIME THERON SENTENCED 25
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MEN TO DEATH IN A SINGLE DAY AND, DUE TO REVIEW BY HIGHER COURTS, NONE OF THEM WERE EXECUTED.

2. AYOB SAID IF HE FAILS TO OBTAIN LEAVE TO APPEAL FROM JUSTICE THERON AND IS ALSO TURNED DOWN BY THE COURT OF APPEALS IN BLOEMFONTEIN, HE PLANS ON CIRCULATING A PROTEST PETITION THROUGHOUT THE WITWATERSRAND TOWNSHIPS

ON BEHALF OF MAHLANGU. AYOB WAS SURPRISED AT THE
STRONG DEPTH OF FEELING HE SENSED IN FAVOR OF MAHLANGU
WHILE ATTENDING MEMORIAL SERVICES IN THE JOHANNESBURG
AREA FOR ROBERT SOBUKWE. AYOB ADMITTED THAT THIS
PETITION METHOD HAS NEVER BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN THE PAST
BUT IS WILLING TO GIVE IT A TRY.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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